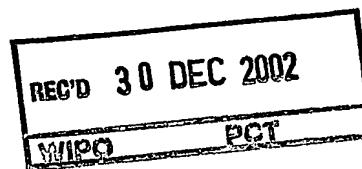




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I, LEANNE MYNOTT, MANAGER EXAMINATION SUPPORT AND
SALES hereby certify that annexed is a true copy of the Provisional specification
in connection with Application No. PS 2983 for a patent by DARRAS L.J.
HANCOCK as filed on 17 June 2002.



WITNESS my hand this
Fifteenth day of November 2002

LEANNE MYNOTT
MANAGER EXAMINATION SUPPORT
AND SALES

AUSTRALIA
Patents Act 1990

COMPLETE SPECIFICATION
PROVISIONAL PATENT

BENCH/COOKTOP/TABLE GUARD

The invention is described in the
Following statement

Bench/Cooktop/Table Guard

This invention relates to a device that helps to prevent accidental spillage of materials or fluids and the accidental dislodgement of objects from benches/cooktops and tables onto floors and/or people and animals.

For many people the lack of a suitable device to prevent accidental spillage of materials or fluids and the accidental dislodgement of objects from benches/cooktops and tables, has resulted in serious injury and/or expense, and in extreme cases, fatality.

The accidental spillage of hot or caustic fluids (for example hot tea or coffee) from benches and tables in the kitchen is one of the leading causes of death and injury for young children in western civilisations. The elderly and infirm also suffer in this situation.

The accidental dislodgement of objects and the spillage of fluids from work benches and tables can impact industry both financially and through injury to employees. School science benches are another area of potential risk if an object or fluid is accidentally dislodged and then subsequently falls to the floor; hot and caustic substances again being a leading cause of injury to school age children in the classroom.

Baby change tables and benches do not generally have any form of device to help prevent the baby rolling off the surface and onto the floor with the consequent risk of injury or fatality being extremely high. This invention offers a high degree of safety in these and other similar situations to potentially any bench/cooktop or table, whilst being easy to install, remove, clean and store.

Devices to prevent spillage from stovetops are available. An example of one such device encloses the stovetop with a metal wire frame. No such or similar device that extends the same or higher levels of safety and convenience to benches/cooktops or tables has previously been available.

This device provides a high degree of prevention from the accidental spillage of materials or fluids, and the accidental dislodgement of objects from benches/cooktops and tables by providing a guard of variable height,

thickness and length (dependant upon the application) to benches/cooktops and tables that helps prevent accidental spillage and dislodgement of objects and/or fluids by barring unintentional access to those objects and fluids in the case of small children, and helping to contain any object or fluid that has been accidentally spilled or dislodged in general application.

This device when fitted to a baby change table or bench will help prevent babies rolling off onto the floor below.

This device is comprised of a shaped (solid or hollow, clear or opaque) generally rectangular guard piece that fits into a matching shaped mounting piece; the mounting piece being part of the original bench/cooktop or table, or alternatively, as a separate mounting that attaches to a bench/cooktop or table by semi-permanent or permanent attachment methods. The mounting may be covered by an optional cover piece or sprung flap to prevent dirt ingress when the removable guard piece is not in use.

In one form of the invention the shaped guard piece and the shaped cover piece are a push fit into a shaped mounting slot. In another form the guard piece or cover piece are shaped with raised or rebated section to form a positive lock to a matching shaped mounting piece. The guard piece may be integral with the mounting.

The shaped guard piece and the shaped cover piece may be solid or hollow, clear or opaque, and may be made of any suitable metallic or non-metallic materials such as steel, aluminium, plastics, fibre or timber, dependant on service requirements of heat or chemical resistance, strength and/or visual amenity. Edges may be radiused or chamfered; length, height and thickness of the guard piece being variable to suit service requirements. A small mounting hole to facilitate storage when not in use is optional. In another form of the invention the cover piece may be a sprung flap or similar device that forms part of the mounting piece, the flap being made of any suitable material.

The shaped mounting piece, which in one form of the invention is an elongated slot, may be formed, cut or fitted separately into the bench top, cooktop or tabletop. In another form of the invention the shaped mounting

piece is attached by mechanical means such as screws, rivets and their associated components or by bonding and/or other non-mechanical methods such as magnetism or suction. The mounting piece may be made of any suitable metallic or non-metallic materials such as steel, aluminium, plastics, fibre or timber, dependant on service requirements of heat or chemical resistance, strength and/or visual amenity. Edges may be radiused or chamfered; length, shape and section width are variable to suit the guard piece and service requirements.

In another form of the invention the shaped guard piece forms an integral part of the bench/cooktop or table. In another form of the invention the shaped guard piece is attached by hinge to form a fold-up section of the bench/cooktop or table.

To assist with understanding the invention reference will now be made to the accompanying drawings which show various examples of the invention:

In the drawings:

- Figure 1 Shows one example of a bench/cooktop and table guard piece and mounting piece according to this invention. An optional mounting hole is also shown.
- Figure 2 Shows one example of a bench/cooktop and table guard piece and alternative mounting piece according to this invention.
- Figure 3 Shows one example of a bench/cooktop and table guard piece and alternative mounting piece fitted to a bench/cooktop or table according to this invention.
- Figure 4 Shows one example of a cover piece according to this invention.
- Figure 5 Shows several alternative mounting methods for one example of a mounting piece according to this invention.
- Figure 6 Shows the application of one example of a bench/cooktop and table guard piece and one example of a mounting piece to a typical kitchen bench according to this invention.

Referring to Figure 1. It can be seen that the bench/cooktop and table guard piece (1) according to this invention is of a generally rectangular, solid and opaque nature that is of variable length to suit the installation. In this form of the invention an elongated slot is formed in a mounting piece (2) to match the guard piece. The guard piece and mounting piece are engineered for an easy "push fit"; in another form of the invention positive locking of the guard piece to the mounting piece may be employed as detailed elsewhere in this statement.

Figure 2 shows an alternative mounting piece (4) and is similar in other respects to figure 1.

Figure 3 shows the bench/cooktop and table guard piece (1) and an alternative mounting piece (5) fitted to a bench/cook or table top (6). It will be realised that the bench/cooktop and table guard according to this invention is not restricted to the forms of mounting shown in these examples. It may be mounted by any suitable means of attachment including direct mounting to a bench, cooktop or table without using a matching mounting piece, for example an elongated slot cut into a bench/cook or table top.

Figure 4 shows a typical example of a cover piece (7) to fit elongated slots as shown in items (2), (4) and (5).

Figure 5 shows several different methods of mounting one form of the mounting piece (2) to a bench/cook or table top (6). Mechanical methods include but are not limited to adhesive strip (8), screws (9), rivets (10) and bonding adhesives (11), which may be used individually or in combination to attach the mounting piece to the bench/cooktop or table. Non-mechanical methods such as magnetism or suction attachment may be used, but are not detailed in the drawings.

Figure 6 shows one example of a bench/cooktop and table guard (1) and one example of a mounting piece (2) fitted to a typical kitchen bench (6) (cooktops and tables similar).

By use of this device it can be seen that items on the benchtop (12) cannot be accidentally spilled or knocked off the benchtop and onto the floor, people or animals in the vicinity of the guarded area of bench, cooktop or table.

The claims defining the invention are as follows:-

1. A bench/cooktop/table guard comprised of a shaped (solid or hollow, clear or opaque) generally rectangular guard piece that fits into a matching shaped mounting piece being part of the original bench/cooktop or table or alternatively as a separate mounting that attaches to a bench/cooktop or table by semi-permanent or permanent attachment methods. The mounting may be covered by an optional cover piece or sprung flap to prevent dirt ingress when the removable guard piece is not in use. Length, width and height of the components being variable to suit application and service requirements. The components may be made of any suitable material.
2. The bench/cooktop/table guard of claim 1 where each component has a raised or formed section to positively lock the guard piece to the bench/cooktop/table or mounting piece.
3. The bench/cooktop/table guard of claim 1 where the guard piece is formed or fitted with pins to facilitate mounting to the bench/cooktop/table or mounting piece.
4. The bench/cooktop/table guard of claim 1 where the guard piece is attached to the bench/cooktop/table by hinges of either permanent or detachable type.
5. The bench/cooktop/table guard of claim 1 where the guard piece forms a permanent part of a bench/cooktop/table either by adhesive, magnetic, suction or mechanical attachment.
6. The bench/cooktop/table guard of claim 1 where the guard piece forms an integral part of the bench/cook or table top.
7. The bench/cooktop/table guard of any of claims 1 – 6 wherein the components are made of metallic materials.
8. The bench/cooktop/table guard of any one of claims 1 – 6 wherein the components are made of non-metallic materials.

9. The bench/cooktop/table guard of any one of claims 1 – 6 wherein the components are made of a combination of metallic and non-metallic materials.

10. A bench/cooktop or table guard, such device substantially as herein described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

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08 05 2002

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08 05 2002

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ABSTRACT

A bench/cooktop and table guard is disclosed. The device consists of a guard piece and matching mounting piece. (1) and (2) , (4) , (5) .

The guard piece (1) may be solid or hollow, clear or opaque of a length, width and height to suit the application. It may have a mounting hole (3) to suit vertical hanging when not in use.

The mounting piece (2) , (4) , (5) is a shaped section that matches the guard piece (1) . A cover piece (7) to prevent dirt ingress when not in use may be provided.

The guard piece (1) may be a positive attachment or push in fit to the mounting piece (2) , (4) , (5) dependant upon shape (an elongated push fit slot is shown in the drawings).

The guard piece (1) may be mounted directly to a bench/cook or table top without use of a mounting piece by cutting or moulding the shape of the guard piece into the bench/cook or table top, or by mechanical mounting of the guard piece (1) to the bench/cooktop or table.

It can be seen that when a bench/cooktop or table is fitted with a guard piece (1) and either a mounting piece (2) , (4) , (5) or a shaped section in the bench/cook or table top to match the guard piece (1) the resultant device forms an effective method of helping prevent the accidental spillage of materials & fluids and the accidental dislodgement of objects from benches/cooktops and tables onto floors, people or animals.

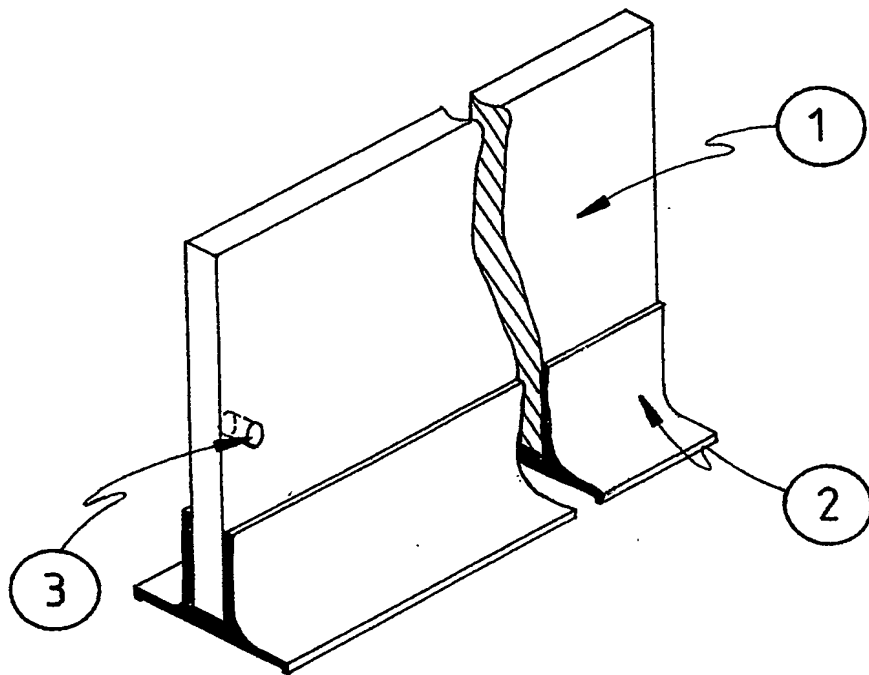


FIGURE 1.

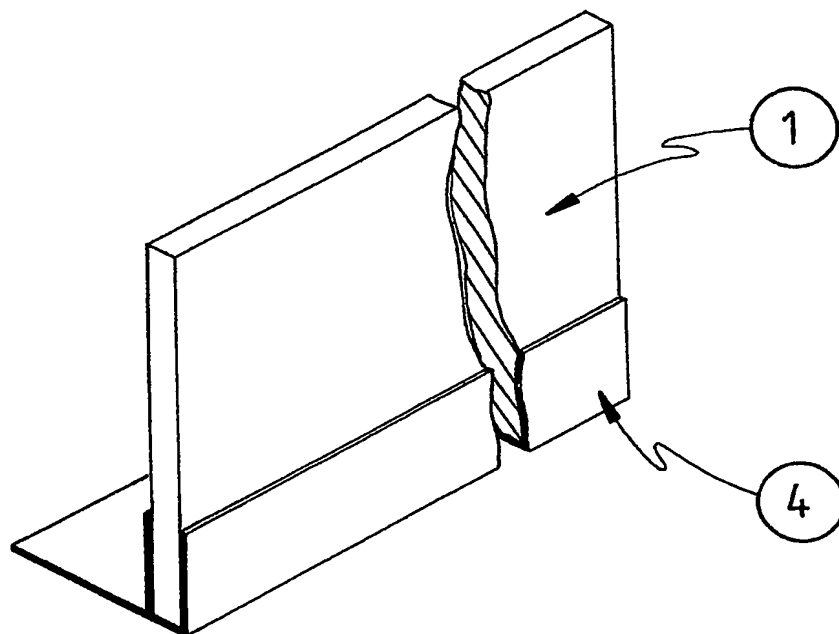


FIGURE 2.

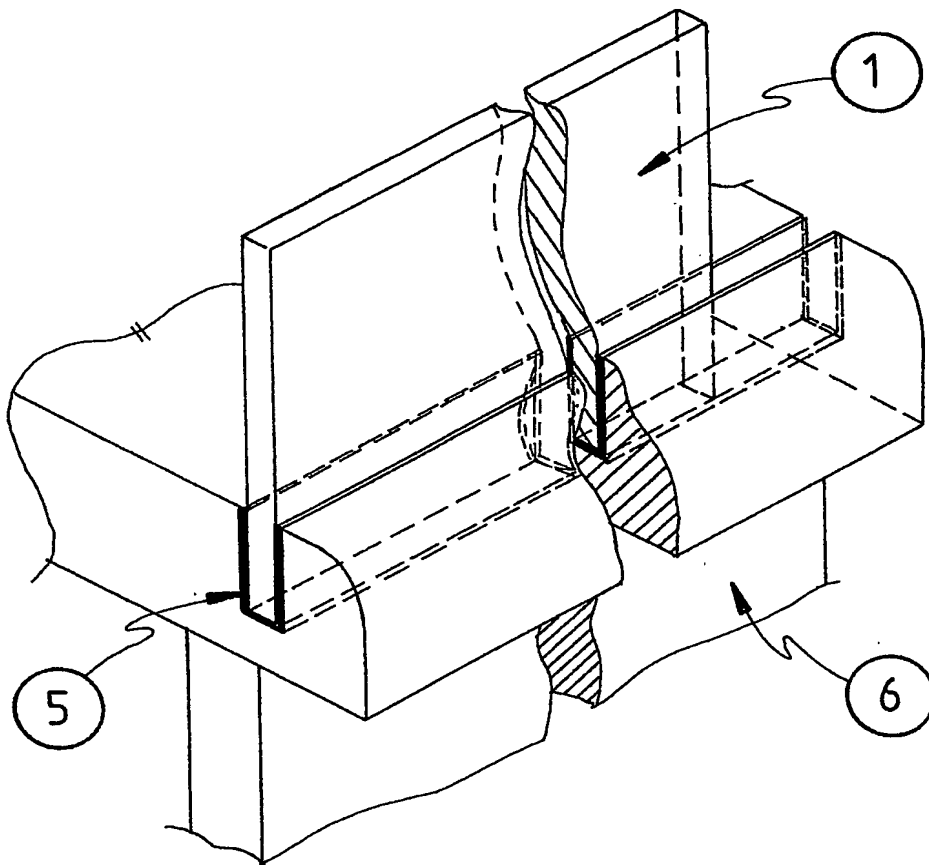


FIGURE 3.

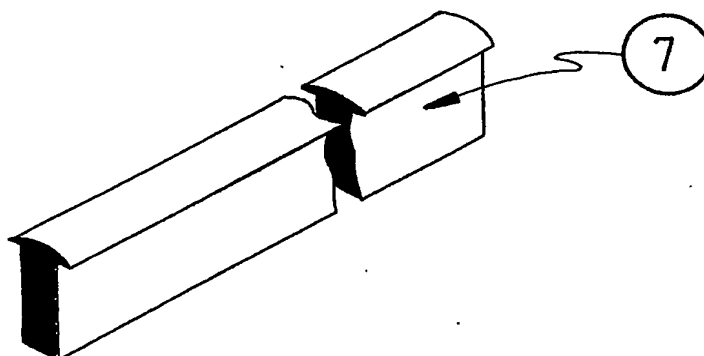


FIGURE 4.

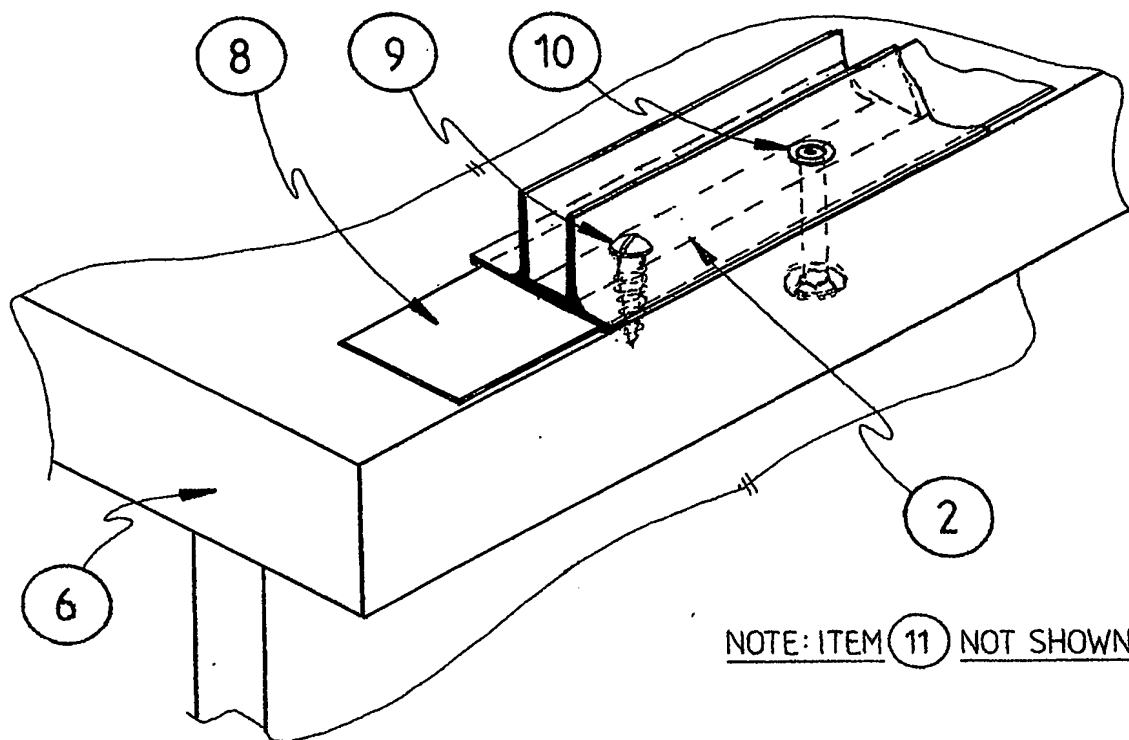


FIGURE 5.

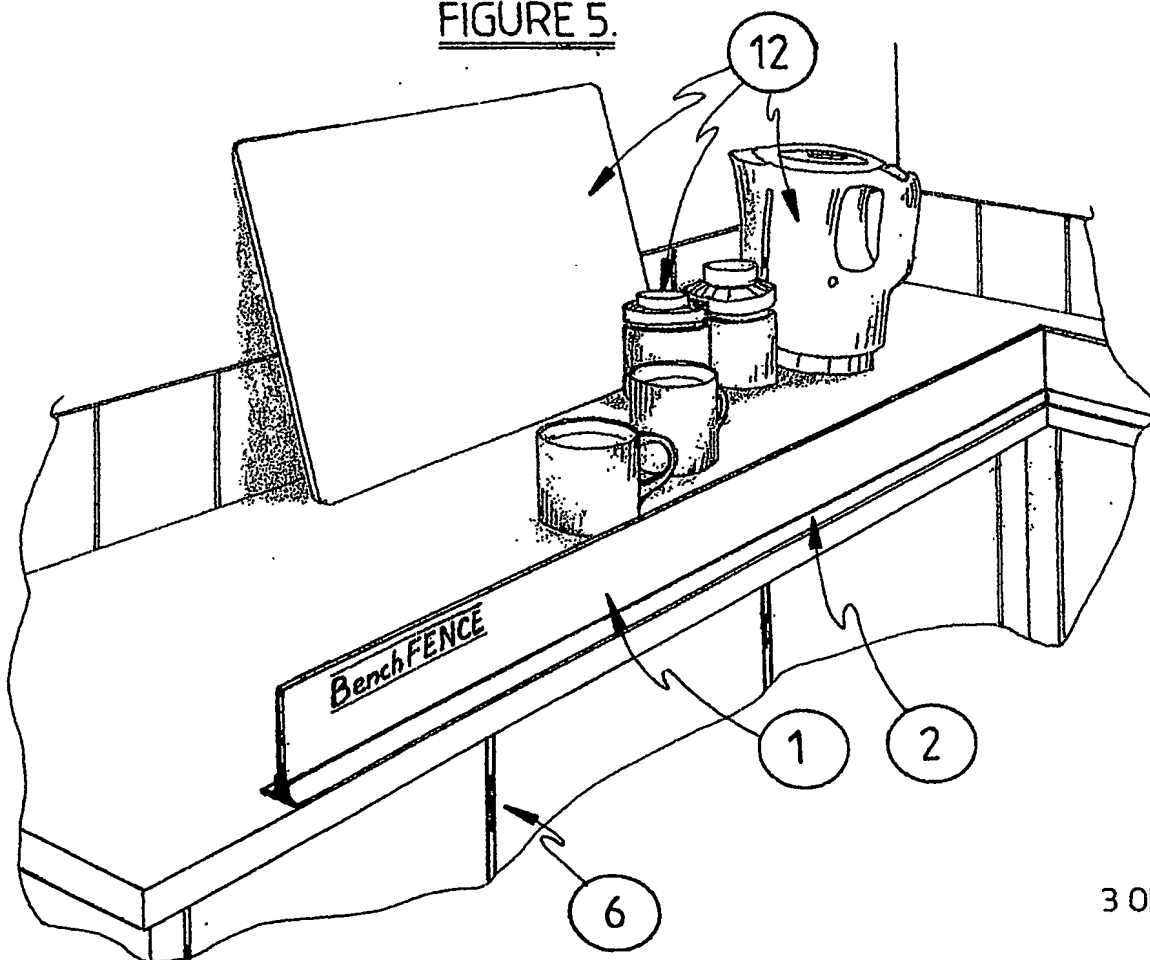


FIGURE 6.

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